

In Support of HB 6578 An Act Concerning Participation in the Election Process ***with improvements***
In Support of SB 1017 An Act Concerning Election Administration

Dear Senator Mae Flexer (Co-Chair), Representative Dan Fox (Co-Chair), Senator Rob Sampson (Ranking Member, Representative Gale Mastrofrancesco (Ranking Member) and honorable members of the Government Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee:

My name is Karen Schnitzer, and I am a voter in Cheshire.

I am in support of HB 6578 *with improvements*. Automatic Voter Registration should be expanded beyond the Department of Motor Vehicles to include the Department of Social Services (DDS), HUSKY, Access Health CT, state colleges and universities and other state agencies. After all, not everyone drives a car.

AVR will enhance the security and integrity of our elections by eliminating outdated addresses and duplicate registrations and will deliver the most accurate voter rolls to cities and towns. Eliminating duplicates will significantly reduce the workload for our registrars.

I also support HB 6578 because I support restoring voting rights to people on parole. Not letting formerly incarcerated people vote undermines good faith attempts at reintegration, and artificially decreases the voting power of the communities in which these people reside. I find it very disappointing to have learned that Connecticut has the most stringent criminal disenfranchisement laws in the Northeast and is the only state in the region that prohibits those on parole from casting a ballot.

I strongly support SB 1017 so that we can continue to use our town's official, secure ballot drop boxes in all coming elections. Given the poor performance of the Postal Service of late and Mr. Dejoy's plans to eliminate first class mail, it seems only prudent to retain the drop box as a safe, secure and convenient alternative means to deliver our ballot.

A strong democracy requires participation by its citizens. Let's make it easy for our citizens to participate. I urge you to pass HB 6578 with expansion of AVR beyond the Dept. of Motor Vehicles to other state agencies, and I urge you to pass SB 1017.

Thank you,

Karen Schnitzer
Cheshire, CT 06410